

The Gospel Witness

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF EVANGELICAL PRINCIPLES
AND IN DEFENCE OF THE FAITH ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS.
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"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ."—Romans 1:16.

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"WOULD YOU PLUCK THE FRUIT BEFORE IT'S WHOLLY RIPE?"

In these words, as we once read, an anxious soul answered his pastor's earnest effort to persuade him to yield himself to Christ. The pastor was undoubtedly right in beseeching him in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God; notwithstanding, it was true spiritual instinct which expressed itself in the words quoted above; and pastors and other earnest soul-winners will be wise to give heed to the admonition therein implied.

Conversion may well be likened to the ripening of fruit. It is not man's work. As rain, and dew, and sunshine, are necessary to bring the fruit to perfection, so there are heavenly powers, spiritual rain, and dew, and sunshine, which work true repentance and faith in the soul, and, like fruit fully ripe, put the trusting soul into the hands of Christ. Moreover, there is often in the awakened soul, a sub-conscience realization that it is the subject of the operation of divine powers, with some vague preintimation of coming deliverance. Before the cry of the new-born soul is heard in confession of faith, there is a mysterious stirring of life within which witnesses to the quickening power of the Holy Ghost.

What, then, is our duty in such a case? We must first of all keep clearly before us the fact that conversion is the unfolding of a God-given life; and that what God begins He must be allowed to complete. We must recognize that as in the natural world life manifests itself according to the law of its own inner nature, from bud to bloom, "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear," and from conception to birth, so in the spiritual realm the processes of life must be permitted to fulfil their course. And the skilful soul-winner, gifted with spiritual discernment, will know when to stay his hand, and worshipfully watch God work. There will be plenty to do to keep down the weeds which are native to human nature; carefully to remove the blight which is ever ready to mar the beauty of fruit and flowers in the garden of the Lord. Unceasing prayer may water the garden; and sometimes a careful hand may bend back a darkening leaf to let the sunshine of truth pour down upon the shadow of a doubt, and thus assist to perfect the beauty of the ripening fruit. But the impatience of an undiscerning zeal must never be allowed to pluck the fruit before it is wholly ripe.

It may be said that we are not in much danger of suffering from over-zealousness. Perhaps in some matters we are too safe in this respect. The calm of our public services would not greatly suffer by the spiritual utterance of an audible "Amen"; nor would it hurt our decorum if, in the freedom of the Spirit, we were sometimes to exclaim, "Hallelujah!" But there is always danger in a zeal that is not according to knowledge; and in no form of Christian activity is such zeal more likely to show itself than in the great business of evangelism. If there be not a solid basis of scriptural knowledge as a working platform we are liable to be led into all sorts of extravagances. In public evangelistic services, as well as in personal effort, by seeking to accelerate the processes of grace in the soul, we are in danger of running before the Lord. By an undue emphasis upon the human part in bringing men to Christ, we may be led to resort to mechanical means to compel a decision for Christ, and thus, unwittingly, if we may venture the daring figure, become spiritual abortionists. At all events, it is, we believe, indisputable that the cause of evangelism has suffered incalculable injury in recent years—say, in the last ten or twenty years—by the hot-house forcing methods which have been employed. Music is a useful adjunct in the hand of God, but it is useless as a substitute for the power of the Holy Ghost. And a great choir under a magnetic leader may lead a congregation to sing itself into a frenzy of excitement, until those who compose it, under the mesmeric influence of a persuasive speaker, are ready to do anything that is required of them, sign a card, or stand, or go to the front; while in all this there may be no touch of the finger of God, and with the result that the last state of such professed converts is worse than the first. We do not condemn the invitation to sign a card, or to stand, or to go to the front; nor the wise use of music in making gospel services interesting and attractive; but we do say that there is danger of our relying upon these methods instead of upon the power of the life-giving Spirit of God; and those who do, are sure to attempt to pluck the fruit before it is wholly ripe.

Let no one suppose, however, that we are recommending the advantages of a comfortable hammock

under a shady tree in the garden of the Lord. Real prayer means labouring, not lounging. And we must be diligent in the use of spade, and hoe, and rake, both in the preparation of new soil, and in the culture of the plants in which the divine life is already unfolding.

Skilled in the cure and care of souls, one thought he saw some fruit ready to be gathered; but on touching it he instantly recognized that the fruit was not quite ripe; and wisely left it to be perfected by the tenderer ministry of the Sun. We cannot always judge by appearances. The little girl in the corner of the pew, like ripe fruit modestly hiding among the leaves, was for a little while overlooked. Verily, "he that winneth souls is wise." How mysterious often are the ways of God! The wind bloweth where it listed, and thou heareth the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Sometimes the new life quietly unfolds like fruit ripening in the sunlight; sometimes it is like a new life struggling to the birth. The world has known but one Expert in this divine art. If we would learn his secret we must be much in His company: "I am my Beloved's, and His desire is toward me. Come, my Beloved, let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages. Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranates bud forth."

A SUGGESTION FOR WITNESS READERS

In the State of New Jersey about four years ago a group of evangelical Presbyterians, in protest against the Modernism of that denomination, began the publication of a religious weekly. We have before us Number Forty-seven of Volume Four, and in a brief editorial praise is given to God because He "placed it upon the heart of one of His own to make an outright gift of \$12,000.00" to the paper.

We have wished and prayed for years that some of our readers who may be stewards of some of the Lord's money, might be moved to make a large gift to THE GOSPEL WITNESS. We believe the receipt of such a gift would make it possible for us to extend the circulation of THE GOSPEL WITNESS enormously, and thus greatly increase its influence. As an evidence of what THE GOSPEL WITNESS means to a great many people, we quote from letters recently received:

One is from a saint advanced in years, dated December 20th, and reads in part as follows:

"I read your address delivered on Thursday evening, November 2nd, which I very much appreciated, and think that you had quite an inspiration. It would be well for every Baptist to read the same. Some of the thoughts have been and are always very much in my mind. What a different world this would be if we could keep ourselves and everyone else sweet and loving."

Another is from a minister. Among many other excellent things he says in his first two paragraphs:

"My Dear Dr. Shields:

"I have been rejoicing in the spirit of your address of Thursday evening, November 2nd. It is with me a passion to love my brothers and sisters in Christ the world over, especially 'native' Christians. My fervent, believing, daily prayer is for a mighty Holy Ghost outpouring on every Christian."

Another letter comes from a brother in Alberta. He says in part:

"Dear Dr. Shields:

"We have been hoping to write you for a long time, to express our gratitude to you for the blessing we have received through the ministry of THE GOSPEL WITNESS. I am sure it has been the means, in a large measure, of helping me to recognize sin in the abstract. . . .

"I spent fifteen years in the wilderness after coming to this country from Devon; but the Lord had great patience, and got me back in my seat to oppose every appearance of evil without fear or favour. . . .

"I am enclosing \$5.00 for as many copies of 'Other Little Ships,' as that will pay for. My copy spends the bulk of its time on the sea, so intend enlarging my fleet!"

Amershaw, Bucks, England.

"Dear Dr. Shields:

"I follow with interest all that is being done in Jarvis Street, and the work of the Home Missions is thrilling. When we think of those young Pastors, all sons of Jarvis Street and true stalwarts of the faith, it gives one a glow—to realize that a live and lasting work is being carried on at the Seminary. May you long continue to carry on the work! I can quite imagine what a joy it gives you, and how much greater joy it gives to our Heavenly Father, to see them being trained in 'the whole counsel of God.'"

"I hope Miss Stoakley is well. I enclose \$30.00, and hope to send my final weekly offerings for this year to her in the New Year.

"Thank you very much for sending the paper during the visit of the King and Queen to Canada. They were splendid pictures of them. What lots of things have happened since then—all those terrible I.R.A. bomb outrages which did fearful damage, and now this strange war, confined so far to the air and sea. Our wonderful sailors and their courage and heroism will go down to posterity.

"Kindest thoughts, and wishing you all the best always.

(Signed) MARY COLLIN."

The last letter is from one of our own members, Mrs. Mary Collin, of Amershaw, Bucks, England. Mrs. Collin's husband was Captain G. R. Collin in the Great War. We visited him Overseas when Mrs. Collin and their son, then a very little child, were living in Toronto; and we remember taking Captain Collin some snapshots of his wife and little boy. Mrs. Collin left Toronto for England some time in 1921, but she has retained her membership in the church, and kept up her connection by regular correspondence, and by a generous support of the church funds.

THE GOSPEL WITNESS carries the message of the church thus to its non-resident members; to people far removed from Toronto; to some who are somewhat advanced in years, and deprived of the privileges of the sanctuary, as these letters indicate; but wherever it goes, it has pleased God to make it a blessing to its readers. How we wish we could increase its circulation, so as to reach tens of thousands more!

We have a plan of writing directly to thousands of ministers, and offering them one of the Editor's books as a premium with a year's subscription to THE GOSPEL WITNESS. But that requires some hundreds of dollars extra. If there are any of our friends who would like to contribute to a GOSPEL WITNESS Extension Fund, we should be happy to hear from them. How much this might easily mean to thousands of ministers! And through the ministers, we could thus reach tens of thousands of other people. THE GOSPEL WITNESS is a missionary enterprise. It has been used of God in the salvation of many, and in building up the saints in their most holy faith. Pastors and Sunday School teachers have testified to its usefulness. Help us to increase its circulation.

The Jarvis Street Pulpit

CAN THE POPE AND MUSSOLINI MAKE PEACE?

A Sermon by the Pastor, Dr. T. T. Shields

Preached in Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, Sunday Evening, December 31st, 1939

(Stenographically Reported)

"And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever."—Isaiah 32:17.

There are people who, in respect to persons and organizations and movements, are popularly described as "yes men". They approve of what is popular. They change their opinions as they change their clothes, according to the fashions of the hour. They have an uncanny instinct which teaches them what people want them to say, and forthwith they say it.

That disposition is not entirely absent from the pulpit. It is easy to prophesy smooth things, and to declare those things to which the carnal mind is disposed to afford a generous hospitality. But it is sometimes the duty of the preacher to say things that are not generally believed. It sometimes becomes an obligation for him to declare truths to which people are naturally opposed. Tolerance in matters of religion is commendable when it means a recognition of the right of every man to liberty of conscience, and the rejection of any form of compulsion in religion; but when tolerance is really used as a synonym for religious indifference, and untruth is tolerated because the truth is neither loved nor believed, it is a sign of moral deterioration rather than of large charity.

The ancient prophets did not fulfil their divine commission, by conforming to the popular tendencies of their time. Neither did the apostles so preach when they declared the testimony of God. It may be that I shall say some things this evening to which, at least at first, some of you will not readily consent. I am not concerned that you should; certainly not that you should so consent because I say it. But at least, I beg of you, give thought to these things, and be thoroughly persuaded in your own mind as to whether they are in accord with the teaching of God's Word.

There is a vicious tendency often apparent in some natures to exploit other people's woes. Whenever there is a fire, or an earthquake, or other disaster of great magnitude, it is necessary that armed men should be enlisted for the protection of property, lest those who are disposed to appropriate that which is not their own should engage in the prosecution of what is commonly called "looting". I read recently of a new kind of burglar, known as the "funeral burglar". This man studied the death notices, and was particular to mark the addresses of residences from which funerals were to be held. He found the telephone number of that house, and after the funeral service was over, expecting that all the family would be away at the cemetery, he would slip into a nearby telephone booth, and telephone—just to make sure. If there was no answer, he would break into the house and possess himself of their valuables—while the people were away burying their dead. A fine commentary on human nature, that is! Could anyone conceive of anything more despicable?

But there are persons and organizations which are ever ready to take advantage of other people's disabilities in order that they may forward their own interests. We need to be constantly on guard during war time, for the reason that, in the necessary restrictions of war time, many will find opportunity to introduce evils which will seek to establish themselves in positions from which they cannot easily be removed. We need to exercise constant vigilance to see that we do not admit greater menaces to human freedom than those we are now fighting to exclude.

One needs always to be on guard against the encroachments of the Church of Rome. However pacific she may appear to be at the moment, however plausible her appeals to statesmen and nations, we do well to remember her record, and to be always on guard. In the last war the Pope launched a peace offensive against us at a very critical hour, which threatened to do great damage by weakening our effort. Then, of course, the Vatican was pronouncedly pro-German. The Canadian Roman Catholic Hierarchy in the last war did everything in its power to restrict and retard Canada's war effort. I know there were individual Roman Catholics who were far otherwise: I speak now of the official attitude of the Church of Rome in this country. It was decidedly against us—against France, against Britain, and for Germany. Even many of our French-Canadian fellow-citizens put their religion before their racial affinity, and stood for Germany as against France.

To-day the situation is somewhat different. Hitler and Stalin are both antireligious. I know that Hitler invokes the help of the almighty—but Hitler's "almighty" is not God, but the devil. There is no doubt about that, and there is no irreligion in that remark. Roman Catholics have suffered great persecution in Germany. Hitler is decidedly antagonistic toward the Roman Catholic Church. She has been despoiled of much of her wealth, and stripped of many of her privileges, particularly in Austria. Hitler is equally hostile toward Protestantism.

The Vatican is not necessarily our ally because it is opposed to Germany and Russia in their attitude toward the Church. When did anyone ever hear of the Vatican being disturbed over the persecution of Protestants or Protestantism? In this country the Hierarchy wants Germany at least to be curbed, but, generally speaking, she prefers it shall be done at the cost of Protestant blood. There was slipped through a little while ago a regulation that not very many people noticed, when enlistments were limited to men with not more than two children. That was not done for economic, but for ecclesiastical purposes. It would have the effect of dismissing from the army a large number of Roman Catholics who, by command of the Hierarchy, have large

families. It would exclude from the army on a wholesale scale in the Province of Quebec the French-Canadian Roman Catholics who will stay at home and breed their kind, while our men go to fight their battles, and so hasten the day when the balance of power shall be with them. They will welcome anything that will reduce the Protestant population of this country.

The Pope has just issued a statement in which he suggests certain terms of peace. There can be no reasonable objection to the terms which he lays down. I think they are admirable; but there is nothing new in them. It is just exactly what has been said before by many. But others will soon be talking peace. There are some in England to-day who are beginning to ask for a statement as to Britain's peace aims. I get many periodicals in which writers insist that the Allied Governments ought clearly to set forth even now the terms upon which peace may be concluded. I would not like to impugn the motives which lead the people so to propose. It may be they are actuated by the best of intentions. But I am sure, willingly or otherwise, they become the greatest enemies of any true peace. I do not believe we ought to talk about peace. I do not pray for peace: I cannot. I am praying for the triumph of righteousness—for "the work of righteousness shall be peace". When righteousness triumphs, peace will follow as surely as sunrise follows the night.

Why should we be on our guard against Rome? Why should I sound what may seem, at the outset, to be almost a discordant note? Why should I not commend the Pope for his efforts toward peace? I say, *we ought always to be on guard against any and all papal overtures*. It is the continual boast of the Roman Catholic Church that she never changes—and I believe that that contention is borne out by the testimony of history. She is always the same. Religiously, Rome is anti-Christian; just as anti-Christian to-day as she ever was. She neutralizes and nullifies every truth of the Christian revelation. I repeat what I have said before, that the Roman Catholic Church is the greatest racketeering organization on earth, and that the Pope himself is the greatest of all racketeers. There is nothing really Christian about the Roman Catholic Church. Roman Catholicism is paganized Christianity.

The Roman Catholic Church imposes, or if you like, superimposes, her whole sacramentarian system upon the doctrines of the gospel of grace. She makes merchandise of Christianity, and of the souls of men. She is, and always has been, the enemy of religious freedom. If indeed Roman Catholics in Austria and elsewhere are subject to persecution, we profoundly regret it. I would fight for their religious freedom—although I believe them to be wrong—I believe they have a right to be wrong if they will. I believe in the absolute freedom of conscience without restriction or external compulsion. I have no sympathy with religious persecution of anyone, anywhere, however they may differ from others. If, however, the Roman Catholic Church is suffering that disability to-day she is only reaping what she has sown, for she has always and everywhere been the enemy of religious freedom. Even Hitler's concentration camps, terrible as they are, cannot exceed the inquisitorial tortures inflicted by the Church of Rome. Hitler's execution axe, dripping with the blood of its many victims, is not more deadly than the axe wielded at the will of the Vatican.

By the fagot and stake, they have taken millions of lives, in order that Rome might triumph.

Rome's secret agents are as active as the agents of Hitler. We are very much alive to the danger of espionage just now. Anyone suspected of having any relations with the enemy is rightly dealt with by the authorities of the state. But let me remind you that Rome also has its secret service; her secret agents are everywhere. You will go to the polls to-morrow. Do as you like. I merely say this, that I would never, under any circumstances whatever, cast my vote to elect a man to a position of public authority who was a Roman Catholic: because I should be putting one in a position of authority who was subject to an extra-state higher authority, and who, therefore, cannot be trusted to exercise the duties of a public office in the public interest, if and when such interest conflicts with the interests of the church to which his primary loyalty is pledged. No matter how good a man he may seem to be the command of the church may require him to sacrifice the public interest. There may be exceptions, but one can only be safe by refusing to vote for a Roman Catholic.

The Roman Catholic Church has its representatives in every newspaper. There is not a newspaper in Toronto that would report what I have already said, not one. They would be afraid to do it. If they did, they would be put under the ban, their circulation would fall. There was a certain man speaking on the radio some years ago—at that time we were on the radio too—and the manager of that station told me that he had been threatened first by the priest, and then at last by an official letter from the hierarchy, that unless that man was put off the radio, he would take action. And when he was not put off, a further official threat was sent saying, that all Roman Catholics would be ordered to boycott the radio products of the company owning the station. There are few, if any, of the larger city dailies that will publish anything in criticism of the Roman Catholic Church. We have no such paper, certainly, in Toronto.

It is important that the minister of Christ should be free to declare the whole counsel of God; and that necessitates his being independent of the newspapers. The daily press everywhere is ready to give large space to the Roman Catholic Church, and always speaks of it with the greatest deference. Other than Catholic churches are often exploited by the newspapers, and sometimes grievously injured by them.

In another direction the Roman Catholic Church has very astutely extended its influence. It has developed a school of diplomacy, and has trained men for ambassadorships, so as to secure, in large measure, control of the diplomatic relations between Governments. The Ambassador of the United States to Great Britain is a Roman Catholic. The President of the United States has recently appointed a special envoy to the Pope. A large number of British ambassadors to foreign Governments are Roman Catholics. The present Foreign Secretary of Great Britain is not a Roman Catholic, I believe, but an Anglo-Catholic; and it requires a great deal of ingenuity to distinguish between them. But these are some of the things we need to bear in mind when we hear of the Pope suggesting terms of peace.

The Pope's recent visit to the Italian King was significant. For the first time in seventy years the Pope called upon the Italian King, and he sat on a throne

between the King and Queen as their equal. And it is the assumption of the right to temporal power, and the papal claim to supremacy over all governments, which makes any Roman Catholic in public office a menace to the public interest.

We want no such peace as the murderous partnership of the Pope and Mussolini could approve. We are glad enough of Italy's neutrality at the moment; but after all, the Italy of Mussolini is just as bad as Germany. Do not forget Ethiopia, for which there can be no justification in righteousness. It was an act of robbery and of wholesale murder, wantonly executed without the shadow of a just cause. What can we expect from a nation that will perpetrate such an outrage? We have to think of Albania, too, possessed without loss of blood, it is true; but what of Spain? The civil war in Spain was a Roman Catholic war, fomented by the Church, financed by the Church, blessed by the Church—witness the recent establishment of the Church in Spain. Franco was victorious by the help of Italian and German troops at a cost of more than a million lives. The blood of a million rests equally upon Mussolini and upon the Vatican and upon the Pope. The present Pope was Secretary of State, and blessed the whole movement; and now promises his blessing upon a robber and murderer like Mussolini. Recently Franco has restored the Church's income in Spain, and the priests are now paid out of Government funds—thus the Church is reaping the benefits of the war.

We need to be on our guard. Perhaps you do not agree with that. "Do not say a word now lest we provoke Italy." Italy is already provoked. If she is neutral, she is neutral for her own purposes, and not in our interest.

On political grounds, we should beware of all papal overtures. I suppose we all see the evil of dictatorships to-day. You do not want to live under the iron will of Hitler, do you? I do not. If I were the last man, I am sure I would rather die striking a blow at that thing, than live to wear that yoke. I value my freedom too much to submit to Hitlerism. We are just as opposed to a Russian dictatorship. But *the greatest dictatorship in all the world is that which has its seat in the Vatican.* The most absolute authority on earth is that of the Roman Catholic Church, and the Pope claims dominion over more subjects than Hitler, Stalin, and Mussolini combined. Before the Great War it was said there were only two perfect organizations on earth, the German army and the Roman Catholic Church. The dictatorship of the Pope is even more dangerous than that of Hitler, for the reason that those who submit to his rule are in all countries.

I return to what I said just now, that I would never vote for a Roman Catholic for public office in this country. In the measure in which he is loyal as a Roman Catholic, he is the subject of another power, of an alien prince, and takes his orders from Rome. For that reason, no Roman Catholic can properly be trusted with public office. I know that such a statement is unpopular. I accept the unpopularity of it. That is my deliberate conviction, and all history corroborates the truth of it. Such an one is all the more dangerous because he presumes to dictate to Governments. He does dictate to the Canadian Government. The Hierarchy did dictate to the Canadian Government when they said, "There shall never be conscription." Why? "Let everyone else volunteer,

and go: we will keep our men at home as we did last time." It is always the same. Of course there are individual Roman Catholic exceptions, but I am speaking of the general rule. I am certain I was right when, at the outset, I said that the Roman Catholic Hierarchy did everything in its power to restrict and retard our operations. We may well be suspicious. The Pope's present gesture does not matter much, but it is only the beginning. Mark my words: we shall hear more of it later—and it will matter much before the great object for which we were compelled to take up arms, is achieved. The Pope may want the power of Hitler broken, but Roman Catholicism is no friend of democracy or of any democratic institution.

We must fight for righteousness, that right may prevail. The war should never be concluded so long as Hitler lives. I believe that Hitler and his aides ought to be brought to trial and visited with the judgment of death like other murderers; and until that is done, righteousness will not have had its way. Then may justice be done to Czechoslovakia and Austria and Poland, and Finland.

We ask for nothing but to be left alone, but we will not be ruled by the threat of force from any direction. If righteousness be recognized as the *sine qua non*, peace will inevitably follow. There is no other way. "The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever." "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." Until right is done we can only gird ourselves for the battle. Stop thinking about peace, or talking about peace, or praying about peace. Let us live and fight for righteousness; and when righteousness wins, peace will follow as a natural consequence. Then it will be permanent. We shall have "quietness and assurance for ever."

I have said all that in order that I may say this before I send you away. *All this is true in a spiritual sense.* There can be no peace without righteousness. There can be no peace between the rebellious soul and the God against Whom we have sinned. Without righteousness, God cannot forgive our sins. We cannot pass them over. He is a holy God, and there is no salvation for any one of us apart from righteousness. Righteousness must prevail. Your sins and mine must be punished somehow, or God cannot be at peace with us—nor we at peace with Him.

But *how is that to be done?* The Pope cannot make peace for you, with all his sacraments. The Church of Rome cannot make peace for any one with all its system of works. How can peace be made between the soul and God? Peace is something more than a negative quality. Peace is more than the absence of war, or of strife. Peace is built upon foundations of righteousness. Righteousness is an essential ingredient of peace. You can no more make peace without righteousness than you can build a solid wall of mere sand without cement. And I say, the Church of Rome cannot effect peace. If you had all the money of a certain man who recently left many thousands to the Church to say prayers after he was dead, it would not help you. I said just now that the Church of Rome is the biggest racketeering organization on earth—and so it is. It sells salvation on the instalment plan as long as you live—and keeps your relatives paying the instalments as long as they live. You never get out of debt. You must pay, pay, pay for ever.

I was going to say that God only knows whether the Masses you pay for are ever said or not, but I do not think they ever ascend as high as that. What a fraud! What a piece of hypocrisy! What a damnable doctrine! I hate it with perfect hatred. I love the souls of men. I love the souls of Roman Catholics. But I hate that institution that is of Antichrist, born from the pit, inspired by the pit; that has done the work of the devil always—and is doing it still, deceiving the souls of men. Doubtless there is even in the Roman Catholic Church a remnant according to the election of grace, who have found the way through the darkness of their superstitions to Christ Himself; and have been saved in spite of the church—but none can be saved by her anti-Christian system.

Who can make peace? There is only One. "None but Jesus, can do helpless sinners good." How did He make peace? Not by making light of your sins. He came from heaven to earth, took upon Him our flesh; was made in the likeness of man, "made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." And under the law He fulfilled the righteousness of the law to the letter, and thus wrought out a perfect righteousness for us.

When He went to the cross, all our sins were made to meet upon Him, and in that dread battle of Calvary, principalities and powers were spoiled, and He made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it. When there the mighty Conqueror bruised the serpent's head, and promised him his ultimate death wound, He won the victory for righteousness for you and for me. And when He offers us peace, He offers us peace on the basis of that righteousness—because everything is paid, and there is no longer any claim against us. He did more than talk peace: He made peace through the blood of His cross.

We are sent to preach peace, to preach peace—how? By Christ Jesus. There is no other way.

But there is peace in Him. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Sometimes I picture to myself that scene on Calvary, and the dim light obtaining when the earth had been shaken by the expiring cry of the Victim on the central cross. I fancy some of those who had seen Jesus of Nazareth perhaps were lingering somewhere at the bottom of the hill. They heard that He had been crucified, that He was dead. And as they talked, perhaps there came a man their way, and for a moment they were startled, "Look! There He is. That is Jesus of Nazareth. I know Him by His robe." "No! Jesus of Nazareth is dead. The soldiers nailed Him to the cross." They parted His garments among them, and as they did so, they found one that was woven from the top throughout, without seam. They said, "It would be a pity to rend it." Said one, "I will tell you what we will do: we will cast lots whose it shall be." "They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots." They cast their lots, and one of the soldiers was told, "The seamless robe is yours; it has fallen to you."

I have often wondered who that soldier was who got His seamless robe? Sometimes I have fancied that it was the one who drove the spear to the heart of the Son of God. Later, as he came down the hill, wearing that

perfect robe, some may have said, "Wearing His robe, he looks exactly like Jesus of Nazareth."

It is only a parable, but by His life and death He wove a seamless robe of righteousness for us, and if we trust Him there can be no chance about it, no gamble. There is such a robe for every one of us. You can put it on to-night, and go out that door wearing His robe.

"Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
'Midst flaming worlds in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head."

May that be your New Year's gift, your New Year's garment; and as you put it on, you may have this assurance, that it will never wear out—it will do for you to wear when you get home to glory. It will give you "quietness and assurance for ever."

THE WEEK-END IN JARVIS STREET

We had good services the last day of the year, with good congregations. For some years it has been our practice to hold a watch-night service, but the last day of the year falling on Sunday, we decided to omit the late service, and confine ourselves to the regular evening service. This was partly because of the inconvenience of two services of an evening, but especially because of our great New Year's Morning Service, an institution of over seventy-five years' duration in Jarvis Street, when members and friends gather for praise and fellowship.

It was, of course, the first New Year's Morning Service to be held in Greenway Hall. It was very largely attended. We began at half-past ten, and, with difficulty, closed a few minutes before one, when the service seemed to be little more than just begun. It was a time of happy fellowship, much prayer, and many testimonies to the divine faithfulness. Following the usual custom, the Pastor gave the church a motto for the year, which was the tenth verse of the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians: "I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

As the meeting closed, we felt once more that there is nothing on earth to compare with the fellowship of the saints.

ABOUT THE SEMINARY

The letter we have quoted from England refers to the work of the Seminary, and the inspiration that comes from the reflection that young men are being trained to go out preaching the whole gospel of the grace of God.

We believe the work of the Seminary is, all things considered, the most far-reaching piece of work in which Jarvis Street is engaged. At the same time it is the most difficult. It seems to be harder to get money for the Seminary than for almost any object. We have spoken of a large gift for THE GOSPEL WITNESS: we need large gifts, as well as small, for the Seminary. Oh that someone would come to our help with a large gift of thousands—or many gifts that would aggregate thousands!

The Seminary is carrying on as usual in wartime. Always difficult, the work is financially more difficult than ever. Won't you help us?

Bible School Lesson Outline

OLIVE L. CLARK, Ph.D. (Tor.)

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THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST

Lesson Text: Matthew 3.

Golden Text: "And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"—Matthew 3:17.

I. The Preparation for Christ—verses 1 to 12.

(Read also Mk. 1:3-8; Lk. 3:2-17; John 1:6-8, 19-28).

The boyhood years of Christ were spent at Nazareth. They were silent years, in that we have no record of a public manifestation of Christ as the Messiah at that time. We do, however, have a picture of the Saviour at the age of twelve years, lingering in the temple, confounding the priests with His wisdom (Lk. 2:41-52).

We are told that John the Baptist came preaching "in those days". The time of his ministry can be identified by the historical reference in Luke's Gospel (Lk. 3:1).

John was a man of simple tastes, and was strong and rugged in character. The people thronged to the wilderness to hear him, because he was a man sent from God (John 1:6). His preaching was effective (Lk. 7:29, 30), and our Lord paid high tribute to him (Matt. 11:7-11; Lk. 7:24-28).

The mission of John the Baptist was to prepare the way for the Saviour's redemptive career, to bear witness to Him as the Light of the world (John 1:7-9). John is identified as the messenger of the Lord whose coming was foretold by Isaiah (Isa. 40:3-5). One is reminded of the road-builders, engineers and work crews who were sent out whenever the Roman Emperors contemplated a visit to points of the Empire which were not adjacent to the main thoroughfares. New highways must be constructed, mountains must be levelled and valleys filled in, that the road might be made easy and straight for the Emperor's official journey. The Lord Jesus Christ had already commenced His triumphal, yet sacrificial, march along earth's highway from Bethlehem. That road would lead through Galilee, and Samaria, to Jerusalem and Mount Calvary and then to Mount Olivet.

It was the duty of John the Baptist to call attention to Christ, to herald His approach. He himself was but a humble voice for his Lord, an instrument to utter His mind and speak forth His message. May the Lord enable each one of us to be a voice for Him, to speak for Him in accents that are clear, tender and strong!

The preaching of John the Baptist was preliminary to the message of the Gospel. He urged men to repent and to turn from their sin. He sought to take from them their false confidence and boast in good works, noble ancestry, or public profession. The Pharisees with their ritualism and the Pharisees with their moralizing must give evidence of true repentance. Repentance is a prerequisite and an accompaniment of saving faith, and one cannot trust in Christ for salvation unless he is prepared to rely wholly upon Him.

The baptism of John was also a preliminary ordinance (Acts 19:1-7). He preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins (Mk. 1:4; Lk. 3:3), in token of the fact that the sins of which confession was made would be fully atoned for in the future. God had covered the sins of the Old Testament saints when they trusted in the blood, but in Christ He would uncover them and put them away for ever (Rom. 3:21-26). John's baptism was water baptism, which typified the baptism of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:4, 5, 16-21). Again, John had power merely to rebuke sin, but the time of the baptism of fire would surely come, when sin would be judged. The metaphor of the threshing-floor is used to denote the final judgment and removal of sin which God's holiness demands (Matt. 13:30, 39-44; Rev. 21:8).

II. The Baptism of Christ—verses 13-17.

(Read also Mk. 1:9-11; Lk. 3:21, 22; John 1:31-34).

Our Lord signified His approval of the witness of John the Baptist by submitting to baptism at his hand. At the same time, He initiated Christian baptism, leaving us an example, that we should follow in His steps.

The Lord's messenger, realizing his own unworthiness, "would have hindered" the Saviour (verse 14, Revised Version), but Christ had come from Galilee for that purpose, and His action was in accordance with the Divine plan for the redemption of the race.

The Lord Jesus Christ, Who was sinless, joined those who were confessing their sins. In this public manner He signified that He was identifying Himself with the human race, being numbered with the transgressors, although He was not of them, and taking upon Himself the sin of the world (Isa. 53:4-6, 11, 12; John 1:29). Only thus would it be possible for believers to be made the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor. 5:21). Our righteousnesses are as filthy rags in His sight (Isa. 64:6; Rom. 3:10-20), but Christ, the Holy One, fulfilled all righteousness on our behalf. He met all the requirements of the holy law, and all the standards of a holy God. He came that He might accomplish righteousness for man, and His holiness is imputed and imparted to all who will trust in Him (Rom. 8:3, 4).

The baptism of Christ signified not merely the fact that He would atone for the sins of men, but it also illustrated the manner of His redemption. Atonement for sin would be secured by His death, burial and resurrection, of which baptism by immersion is a representation (Rom. 6:3, 4). How significant and solemn was that holy rite wherein the Son of God, Who was also the Son of man, set forth in symbol His own death, burial and resurrection for man's redemption! Shall we not humbly, obediently and joyfully identify ourselves with Him, and confess that in Him, we, too, have died to the old life of sin and risen in newness of life with Him (Col. 2:12: 3:1)?

Lest any should think that this lowly Nazarene was like the others around Him as He went down into the water, was baptized and emerged from the water, God the Father and God the Holy Spirit gave witness that this was indeed the Son of God (John 1:32-34), and that He was now being anointed, as it were, for His ministry as the Prophet, Priest and King (Isa. 42:1; 61:1, 2).

The heavens were opened when Christ was baptized, and the voice of God proclaimed His good pleasure in the Son of His love (Matt. 17:5; Mk. 9:7; Lk. 9:35). They who trust and obey will experience the blessing of the Lord (John 8:29).

NEWS OF UNION CHURCHES FROM MISS LEILA BOYD

(Excerpt from a Letter to Rev. W. G. Brown)

You express the hope that I have not forgotten my Seminary days. Your conclusion is right,—I certainly have not. Indeed those days and those friendships became so much a part of me that I still live frequently in them in memory. No place seems quite so much like home as does 337. There was so much to enrich one during those years that it would seem as if it takes years to appreciate the real value of what was crowded into those four. Jarvis Street remains home to me, and Sunday, though filled here with other quite different interests, marks its hours still by the services of the day there. Vagabond thoughts refuse to be limited by our close-up horizon, so though I disturb no one by my entrance, I frequently take my place among those who enjoy the Pastor's ministry. Looking back now I wonder how I could have been so careless as ever to let slip one opportunity for a further enjoyment of life's best things which were all so lavishly spread before us during our Seminary life. Still, I think, in spite of indolence, I did store up treasures for memory's inventory, for I know now how many hours, which might have been dull or lonely here, have been full of interest, and happy, because I had something beyond my present surroundings of which to think. In another way also have those years ministered to my present content and happiness, that is, in the many friendships formed, which formed a basis for a correspondence that fills every spare moment, leaving few in which to feel lonely or discontent, correspondence which is an outlet from that killing monotony one could drop into in such a place, correspondence through which has come many words of encouragement challenging one to deeper, better things for Him. No, I have not forgotten the Seminary, nor any of those whose labours of love made it possible and profitable.

I was, therefore, happy to know that though working under real handicaps, blessing was still being enjoyed there this year.

Yes, I rejoiced greatly with you all in the really fine time enjoyed at Convention this year. I am hoping to hear of much resultant blessing. It is most gratifying also to see how richly the Lord is blessing in the new Jarvis Street. Yes, I saw it and loved it. But the impression left upon me after a week there this summer was not so much caused by the magnificence of the building but by the spirit of the services, the deep earnestness of purpose on the part of the Pastor and people. I was amazed then, in the hot summer days to see how it was packed to capacity, by those whom one felt did not come so much to see a building but to hear a message from God's Word which they could trust to be sane and true. In view of all that has taken place internationally since, I cannot be thankful enough for the blessing I personally received from the services I attended. I trust that God Who has shown His approbation in that way may also supply the material needs and relieve the Pastor of that burden. I read avidly every word of the G.W., often reading those advertisements several times so as to be sure I'm not missing anything!

BLESSING AT KAPUSKASING

"On Sunday, December 3rd, Deacon Aceti of Timmins supplied here while our pastor, Rev. Robt. Brackstone, went to Geraldton. Mr. Aceti was requested to tell the congregation the story of his conversion from Romanism to the Gospel of Grace. Every one made it his duty to pass the word around and the result was that in the evening our church building was packed to capacity. Mr. Aceti told briefly of his conversion, and then from that he delivered a very stirring and appealing message. Although no one made public confession of faith, the presence of the Lord was very deeply felt.

The following Sunday every heart was stirred, and every one offered a silent prayer of thankfulness as a French Canadian Roman Catholic mother of eight walked to the front in a confession of faith. This was the first time she had attended our services, and she told us afterwards, with tears in her eyes, that she had never before heard anything so beautiful as this sermon. The sermon as usual exalted Christ and His precious blood. This lady lives about four miles from town, but she intends to walk out for Sunday services. She tells us that she awakens in the middle of the night and meditates on the grand discovery of what Christ has done for her. The priest has not yet visited this woman since her conversion, so please pray that our Lord may help her as he did me in my time of trial.

The next Sunday night we felt great joy in seeing the eight-year-old daughter of Deacon Umphries calmly walk to the front in response to the invitation. She had been saved in the privacy of her own home but she wanted to tell the whole church, and she did. Then again last Sunday on

Christmas Eve three more persons confessed Christ publicly. One was a French Canadian Roman Catholic girl from Timmins (on a visit here) who is seeking the light. The gospel was a great revelation to her, as it was the first time she had heard its message. This girl will, like myself, have a terrible time ahead of her, as she is an active member of her church, being affiliated with two or three of its societies. We do also commend her to our mighty God that He will also sustain her. The second person was a young man also from Timmins, who accepted Christ. The third was a Bible School pupil of fifteen years, who also yielded to Christ the Saviour. All these blessings have helped to make our Christmas an especially joyous one.

We also had a Christmas concert on Friday, December 22nd. Almost every Sunday School pupil took part, and every one did his share well. Many of the parents came out and we had a happy evening. After all the talent had been displayed every Sunday School child received a present, the older ones a New Testament, and the smaller children other gifts. One hundred bags of candy were also given as well as parcels of clothes and groceries for needy persons."

MRS. OSCAR RICHER.

JAIL SERVICES

For some years past, Seminary students have visited the Don Jail every Wednesday afternoon from three to four o'clock to preach the gospel. Services there this year were much appreciated, and we often had a hundred men attending. Of course a good many attend just to get out of their cells for a short time and see their friends, but they gave good attention, and not one man made any trouble. Most were young men, several were of teen age, a few had grey hair, but few seemed like hardened criminals. Two had been professing Christians, apparently fallen by the way. The speakers included Brothers Huebert, Hewson, Frank Cook, Jack Scott, Stanley and Frank Wellington, and the writer, all of the Seminary, and alumni, and our Professor W. S. Whitcombe. Mr. B. Ririe, a retired missionary from China, spoke once, and Rev. Frank Roblin and Rev. D. Hackett also spoke. Mr. Albert Hewson was on hand to play the organ.

Two men professed Christ. One man we lost track of, the other was known to us before going to jail. He had been invited to church and to Young People's meetings, but had come in a desultory manner. Trying a new thrill led him to jail. That brought him to time, and he seems to have accepted Christ in all soberness and truth. May he be kept true to Christ where he is and be used to lead others to Him. At the last service four men professed to accept Jesus Christ as Saviour, and time will prove the depth of their sincerity.

SAM JEFFERY.

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